

COMMUNITY PARTNER HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Welcome to the Utah State University Community Bridge Initiative (CBI) partnership program, where we work to bridge campus and community! The Community Bridge Initiative, offered by the USU Center for Civic Engagement and Student-Learning (CCESL), is a place-based service-learning model that enables students to utilize knowledge obtained in the classroom to tackle real-world problems identified by the community. Based on the successful CBI pilot year with Logan City, courses are matched with community-identified projects. Students work with community leaders to define meaningful solutions, develop action plans, and implement projects directly relevant to their course curriculum. As a result, students are given greater depth to their course content and come away with the experience of addressing locally relevant issues. Through this new partnership model, we hope to bridge the gap between campus and community to create a healthier, safer, and more sustainable future for us all. We value each of our community partners and are excited to have you onboard!

PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS

Through the CBI Partnership Program, community agencies have the opportunity to sign up for two distinct partnership classifications – each with their own benefits and qualifications. A full list of Partnership Requirements & Benefits for 2016 can be found in Appendix A.

BENEFITS

All Partners regardless of tier level are awarded certain benefits, including the use of the Val R. Christensen Service Center's website, Facebook, monthly newsletter, and general volunteer contact list, to promote partner events and volunteer opportunities. Additionally, all partners will be invited to annual events hosted by CCESL and the Service Center such as volunteer recruitment events or trainings. Additional benefits depend on your tier level, with the greatest difference being the opportunity to partner with Service-Learning (SL) classes.

In SL classes, students gain practical experience applying classroom material through the completion of projects with community partners. SL projects are determined by community partners and faculty prior to the start of the semester, and community partners act as **co-educators**. Students benefit through Service-Learning by deepening their knowledge and understanding through hands-on experience, and community partners benefit by obtaining capacity to complete high-priority projects.

BASIC PARTNERSHIP

Agencies who sign up for the Partnership level within the CBI Partnership Program will be eligible for support from students interested in volunteering with local community agencies. These partners can post their volunteer needs and opportunities to the Service Center's webpage and will have access to students who are interested in one-time or on-going volunteer opportunities. Often this level is good for

agencies that have not partnered with the University in the past or do not have the capacity to work with a class over a 12-week semester. Basic Partners who are interested in increasing their involvement at a later time can always change their partnership level to Bridge Builder.

BRIDGE BUILDER

Bridge Builder Partners are those who are interested in working with a SL class or classes to complete community projects. Partners who sign up at this level will encourage their employees to complete the CBI project application. The Executive Director (or equivalent) of the community partner will collect the project applications from their staff. Those projects that are determined to be a good fit will be prioritized, and the final list of feasible, high-priority projects will be submitted to CCESL. With this final list, CCESL will work to match projects with faculty and classes on campus. Although CCESL cannot guarantee there will always be a classroom match for all projects proposed, we will do our best to match university resources to projects defined by the community.

Bridge Builder Partners will have access to faculty with expertise in their field, support from students with skills and knowledge directly related to the agency's work, and the opportunity to host student internships.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

To protect community partners, students, and faculty, **all community partners are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University**. This document, also signed by a USU representative, provides legal protection for faculty and students while they are on-site completing service activities, while also outlining the benefits/expectations of being a CBI community partner. Specifically, the MOU states that the community partner is responsible for background checks necessary for students to participate at their sites. Community partners can determine what level (if any) of background checks are necessary and will work with students and faculty to ensure that background checks are completed prior to the start of service. The MOU also states that the University must be listed as an additional insured on the organization's policy.

MOU's must be completed prior to any student or faculty arriving on site to work with a partner and must be renewed annually. MOUs can be filled out in person or online.

SERVICE-LEARNING

Service Learning (SL) is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Through SL, students have the opportunity for practical application of course material and professional skills, while addressing a defined community need. Participating community organizations gain a fresh perspective on a project or issue and added capacity to serve their community better. SL aims to be a mutually beneficial relationship, improving learning experiences, prompting meaningful classroom reflection and discussion, and providing assistance to local governments, non profits, and the common good.

SERVICE-LEARNING PROCESS

1. **Memorandum of Understanding** - Complete MOU with USU and CCESL, indicating that you are interested in the Bridge Builder Partnership level and working with classes.
2. **CBI Application** (found in Appendix B) – This is an opportunity for you, as an agency, to come up with projects that you would like SL courses to tackle. The short project application is to be distributed to community partner staff/employees so that they can brainstorm and propose potential Service-Learning projects. The administration of the organization will then prioritize projects prior to submitting the final list of projects to CCESL and the Service-Learning program.
3. **Course Matching** – Once your organization submits a project list, CCESL and the Service-Learning program will match your potential projects with courses being taught on campus. Although we do our best to meet community need, there is not always a match each semester, and some community agencies might have to wait until the following semester.
4. **Scope of Work** (Appendix C) – Prior to the start of the semester, community partners and faculty will meet to complete the Scope of Work (SOW), outlining goals of the project, roles and responsibilities, and deliverables to be completed by the end of the semester. Both parties will be involved in the completion of this document and will sign it.
5. **Orientation** – At the beginning of the semester, the community partner should schedule time to provide an orientation to students who will be involved in the SL project—either during class time or on-site. Orientation should include a discussion of the issue in the community, background of the agency, and overview and goal of the project.
6. **Mid-Semester Check In** – A mid-semester meeting provides time for faculty and community partners to assess the progress of the project, determine if any changes are necessary in the Scope of Work or project deliverables, and address any challenges or concerns.
7. **Assessments** – After the completion of the semester and the project, Community Partners complete a short survey assessing their experience of working with USU and the students, identifying ways to improve the SL program, and sharing their accomplishments.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

SL projects can be as diverse as the needs in the community or courses offered on a campus. Each semester it is important for faculty to find a project that will provide students with the opportunity to gain valuable experience and awareness working in the community on a project relevant to the coursework. What this project exactly looks like, though, depends on the needs defined by our Community Partners and the projects they have proposed. When completing the CBI Application as an agency, be creative with the projects proposed, but also keep in mind that these typically need to be completed within a semester and by students who may not have as deep or technical of understanding or skills as you. Projects should be engaging and offer them a chance to learn new skills, while also helping you to serve your community.

Project Ideas might include:

- *Music*: Students join with a local elementary school to provide music instruction.

- *Art*: Learners in an art course partner with an agency for individuals with disabilities to help create a mural representing the agency and its clients.
- *Photography*: Students in a photography course partner with a local nonprofit to help the agency tell its story visually.
- *Computer Science*: Students in a computer science course help an organization to build a website.
- *Justice Studies*: Students partner with local agencies to implement victim/offender mediation programs.
- *Communication*: Learners partner with local neighborhood groups to collect oral histories.
- *Nursing*: Students help with local health screenings.
- *Sociology*: Students work together to mediate community-based social problems.
- *Business*: Participants work with partners to develop marketing plans, business strategies, and sustainability plans.

RURAL RECYCLING PROGRAM

Cache Valley has for over 10 years provided curbside recycling. However, in rural areas of the county, the efficiency of recycling collection is lower, largely because residences and recycling bins are more dispersed. To make the existing program more efficient and cost-effective, Mayor Craig Petersen requested, through the Community Bridge Initiative, that USU conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the current rural recycling routes. Two complete reports were written that analyzed expenses and that included a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the rural recycling program, as well as seven different options to be considered in making decisions about the rural recycling program. 100% of the students felt that the course was positive and that they would list this experience on their resume.

AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT WITH LOGAN CITY

Faculty and students at USU joined forces with Logan City to help improve local air quality. While the Environmental Sociology class conducted surveys of local perspectives on air quality, the Air Quality Measurement course conducted a carbon monoxide experiment, and a Communicating Sustainability course joined with a local high school and Logan City to provide a clean-air poster contest, further educating the community and students about local air-quality concerns. 100% of the students felt that the course was positive and that they would list this experience on their resume.

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Partnership Requirements & Benefits 2016	Partner Level	Bridge Builder Level
Qualifications		
Renew MOU on annual basis	X	X
Have general liability insurance (covers at least \$1,000,000/occurrence with a \$2,000,000 policy aggregate) and add Utah State University as "additional insured" to organization's policy	X	X
Participate in annual CCESL survey	X	X
Maintain current information on our website	X	X
Complete the new partner online orientation	X	X
Provide a description of volunteer orientation and training that potential volunteers would receive	X	X
Ensure that student volunteers are kept in line of sight of a supervisor at all times unless they have been satisfactorily background checked to your standards	X	X
Have been a successful Partner Level organization for one full calendar year		X
Submit a list of organization's high priority lists on an annual basis		X
Host or attend meetings with service-learning faculty/staff when requested		X
Partner with at least one service-learning faculty member during the year		X
Assume a co-educator role in student education		X
Meet with service-learning faculty/staff to complete a Scope of Work (SOW) for each service-learning project/course		X
Participate in student impact assessment after every project		X
Benefits		
Promotion of volunteer opportunities on Val R. Christensen Service Center's website, Facebook page, monthly newsletter, general volunteer contact list	X	X
Logo placed on Community Partner page of the Service Center website, with a link to organization's contact information and opportunities	X	X
Invitation to annual volunteer recruitment events	X	X
Invitation to Volunteer Management Training	X	X
Distribution of pre-approved posters and flyers on campus	X	X
Access to faculty with expertise in your field		X
Access to students with skills and knowledge directly related to your organization's work		X
Opportunity to serve as a co-educator to future leaders in your field		X
Invitation to Speed Networking and partner recognition events		X
Apply to host student internships		X

APPENDIX B: CBI APPLICATION

The Utah State University (USU) Community Bridge Initiative (CBI) is a place-based service-learning program that enables students to utilize knowledge obtained in the classroom to tackle real-world problems identified by the community. CBI matches a multidisciplinary set of courses to a community-identified set of projects. Students work with community leaders to define meaningful solutions, develop action plans, and implement projects directly relevant to their course curriculum. As a result, students are given greater depth to their course content and come away with the experience of addressing locally relevant issues.

CBI is dedicated to providing the highest quality service through the committed efforts of USU faculty, staff, and students. This application will help to determine project suitability and prioritization.

1. Non-Profit/Government Agency Name: _____

2. Project Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

3. Project Title: _____

4. Project Location & Transportation: _____

a. Location of project work site: _____

b. Distance from USU: _____

c. Does partner have funds to cover travel costs? _____

d. Do faculty and students need to provide their own transportation? _____

5. Number of 12-week semesters needed to complete the project: _____

6. Prerequisite (required) skills/courses needed to complete the project: _____

7. Project Description (attach sheet):

- a. Discuss the specific community need this project will address.
- b. Outline your expectations of faculty, staff, and students.
- c. Will this be a new project or an expansion of an existing project?
- d. How many hours per week will this project demand?
- e. List anticipated tools/materials/supplies necessary to complete this project.
- f. Can CBI partner provide orientation and training?
- g. Can CBI parent provide supervision after training?

If so, what percentage of total period of performance can be supervised?

- h. How many students will be needed?

8. Can CBI partner provide in-kind contributions? Please provide list and estimated value of each. For example, office space, internet, training, certification program, transportation, materials/supplies, etc.

Contact Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to your supervisor (i.e., executive director, school principal, mayor) who will select and submit projects from your non-profit organization, school, or government to be matched with CBI courses.

For more information, contact:

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435-797-8135

APPENDIX C: SCOPE OF WORK

Project Title:

Date:

USU Courses Represented:

USU Faculty Contacts (name, title, email, phone):

CBI Partner Contacts (name, title, email, phone):

Project Goals/Objectives:

Timeline/Major Milestones or Tasks:

Final Deliverables:

Partner Responsibilities:

USU Responsibilities:

Approved by (CBI Coordinator): _____

CBI Partner: _____

USU Faculty: _____